constructive dialogue with Bangladesh on the subject.

NEW DELHI
8 October 93.

Discussion with Permanent Under Secretary of British commonwealth

4605. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether during a meeting between Mr. David Gillmore, Permanent Under Secretary of British Commonwealth and Foreign Office and the Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. V. K. Grower on 2nd February, 1994, the former expressed appreciation for steps taken by India for greater transparency on human rights issue including providing increased access to outsiders; and

(b) if so, what other issues were discussed during the meet and the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Other issues discussed during the meeting included exchanges of high-level visits during 1994, Indo-UK economic relations, bilateral cooperation in the areas of terrorism and drug-trafficking, the situation in J&K and Indo-Pak issues. The objective of regular Foreign Office consultations with the UK is to enhance understanding of each other's concerns and give impetus to bilateral relations, which was achieved during the talks.

Chinese Naval activities in the Indian Ocean

4606. Shri G. PRATHAPA REDDY :
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether China is making preparation for setting up Naval bases in the Indian Ocean ;

(b) whether India has noted the promoting Naval activities by China in the Indian Ocean; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) Government is aware of unverified press reports to this effect.

(b) and (c) The Chinese Government, with whom this matter has been discussed, has dismissed these reports as exaggerated. Government keep under constant review all developments having a bearing on the country's security and take appropriate measures to safeguard the national interest.

US President's letter to Indian Government

4607. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the U.S. President has written any letter to the Indian Government recently ;

(b) if so, what are the contents of the letter and the reaction of Government thereto ;

(c) whether Government have lodged any protest to U.S. Government for its interference in India's internal matters including CIA assistance to ISI in Pakistan against India ; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In a letter to Prime Minister, President Clinton stated that he looks forward to meeting PM in person to review the global and bilateral issues with the goal of advancing US-Indian relations and promoting understandig and friendship between our two people. The US President said Deputy Secretary Talbott's visit to India underscores the importance the US placed on the region. President Clinton has also expressed his deepest sympathy and sincere condolences on the death of two Indian soldiers in Somalia last month.

In his response, Prime Minister stated that he looked forward to his conversation